

Bangor University

## COUNCIL MINUTES

At a meeting of the Council held in the University on Friday, July 2020.

Present

Mrs Marian Wyn Jones (Chair), Dr Tomos Dafydd, Professor Iwan Davies, Dr Myfanwy Davies, Professor Andrew Edwards, Mr Iwan Evans, Dr Griff Jones, Dr Karen Jones, Dr Llion Jones, Mr Marc Jones, Sir Paul Lambert, Mrs Alison Wilson, Ms. Ellen Parry Williams, Miss Julie Perkins, Dr Ian Rees, Mr Harry Riley, Professor Gareth Roberts, Professor Paetary).

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essor Nicky Callow

### 19.101 WELCOME

Chair welcomed Professor Paul Spencer, Pro-Chancellor / Head of the College of Natural Sciences, Mr Iwan Evans, President, Undeb Myfyrwyr C(b M)-10 (y)-12 (r)(v)-11 S o ((b M -22.7[-7 r)4 (a)-6n y President, Students' Union to their first meeting.

### 19.102 DEATHS

Chair referred to the recent deaths of:

John Bector a student in the School of History, Philosophy and Social Sciences

Margaret Hewitt a graduate of English & History in 1964 who also sat on the University's Alumni Advisory Board for 10 years

Members fell silent in tribute to their memory.

### 19.103 CONGRATULATIONS

A. On the award of a Readership:

Dr Sam Oliver, School of Sports, Health and Exercise Science

B. The Chair also noted the following achievements:

Covid19 Research

A pilot programme to flag early signs of the coronavirus in Welsh communities by monitoring sewage systems, was awarded almost half a million pounds. Leading the research is Professor David Jones of the School of Natural Sciences.

## Book of the Year / Llyfr y Flwyddyn

Two creative writing Lecturers have been included in this year's English language Wales Book of the Year shortlist, and a Journalism Lecturer is shortlisted in the Welsh language Llyfr y Flwyddyn, announced on 1 July 2020. The two shortlisted for the English awards are poet Zoë Skoulding for her latest collection *Footnotes to War* and novelist Alys Conran, for her latest novel *Dignity*. Shortlisted for the Welsh Llyfr y Flwyddyn fiction category is *Babel* a novel by Ifan Morgan Jones.

## Undergraduate dissertation Published

Former student James Edwards has seen his final year dissertation work at Bangor University published in *Acupuncture in Medicine*. He compared treatment outcomes for acupuncture against drug therapy and surgery.

## Eisteddfod

University students were successful at the virtual Urdd Eisteddfod T in May 2020.

- Cai Fôn Davies, a second year student studying Welsh and History won the Main Composer title.
- Aelwyd JMJ, the Urdd Aelwyd of Bangor University Welshmedium Halls of Residence, came second in the Choir (14

## 19.104 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- A. Members were reminded that they should declare any personal, financial or beneficial interest in any matter under consideration at this meeting prior to that matter being considered.
- B. No declarations of interest were made in relation to this meeting.

## 19.105 STUDENT RECRUITMENT UPDATE

- A. Ms Westwood was formally welcomed to the Council in her role as Chief Marketing Officer/Vice President International.
- B. Members were apprised that the position following the UCAS deadline in June indicated that the University continued to run behind the sector and was losing market share of UK domiciled students. This was despite the university investing in external consultancy and external service provision, as well as increased investment in advertising, where it would have been reasonable to have expected to see some benefits in terms of performance in comparison to the rest of the sector. It was difficult to know how much the Covid-19 situation had impacted on this situation, however there remained a huge challenge both in the short and long term to turn the situation around.

The situation in relation to international recruitment has, historically, been stronger for the university, but the Covid-19 situation has impacted this particular market even more than the Home/EU market. Ms Westwood noted that clearing was going to be an even more critical period than usual for the university. The approach to clearing was currently being planned in order to maximise advertising and staffing around the A-level results day. The university's partnership with UCAS Media, and a recent agreement with UniQuest, have allowed the university to enhance its advertising focus its activities in key areas, and follow up on applicants especially from the English market.

Looking forward the current portfolio review being undertaken as part of Professor Nicky Callow's work on learning and teaching is going to be crucial to ensuring that the university has a marketable set of courses to promote for 2021/22 and onwards. Further investment in marketing is crucial in order that the university has new talent providing fresh perspectives and approaches. In tandem with developing the brand and narrative of the university is a key deliverable for Ms Westwood over the summer.

- C. The Council welcomed the approach being undertaken and acknowledged the challenging picture for the 2020/21 recruitment cycle and the time it would take to make a difference to the current situation.
- D. It was agreed that the new branding would be shared with the Council at its September meeting.

19.106 MINUTES

A. The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2020 were *confirmed*, subject to two minor amendments being made noting that in relation to minute 19.86 (Review of the Executive Team) the changes made were most neutral, and clarifying titles in relation to the Assistant Pro Vice Chancellors.

B. With reference to:

[1] REF(minute 19.64A) Professor David Thomas provided the Council with an update on the REF. The Council *noted* that the Units of Assessment had been brought down from 11 to 9, and currently the university envisaged entering 2 FTE members of staff into the process. Professor Thomas confirmed that in his opinion the university was currently in a robust position, and a further mini REF was planned for October

[2] Review of the Executive Team (minute 19.86); The Chair congratulated Professor Thomas on his recent appointment as Professor of Arctic Ecosystem Research at the University of

- B. The Council ~~noted~~ the outcomes of the Survey and requested that it be kept fully informed in relation to the work being undertaken. In particular the Council ~~noted~~ concerns about the issues with the PDR process and requested a further report on how this was being addressed.

19.108VICE

has responded to the immediate operational challenges associated with the pandemic and it was now necessary to consider fully the implications of the pandemic on the future operations of the University and its capacity to respond.

It was noted that an overview of what is contained in the paper before Council had been shared with members of staff at a webinar delivered by the Vice Chancellor on the 30 June, in order that staff are engaged in the direction of travel. The position of the university at this time cannot be downplayed, and the Executive intends to work with the COVID Governance Oversight Group to bring forward further recommendations based on the strategic pillars provided in the paper.

At the current time it was difficult to accurately model the university's financial position, as this would necessarily need to be based on the final student numbers for 2020/21. However, work had already been undertaken to provide the Council with some scenarios based on HEFCW reporting requirements, which painted a picture of the university's likely position going into the autumn, currently understood.

- [2] The University Council noted the outcomes of the modelled scenarios and approved the strategic approach outlined in the paper

#### 19.120 ESTATES MATTERS

##### A. Emerging Estates Strategy

- [1] The Council considered an update from the Director of Property and Campus Services on the emerging Estates Strategy which mapped out the direction of travel over the next few months. It was noted that the current Estates Strategy has expired, and the University needs a refreshed and integrated emerging Estates Strategy to meet future requirements.
- [2] Members welcomed the vision contained within the paper, and it was confirmed that stakeholder engagement would commence as soon as possible. A further update would be provided at the Council Meeting in either October or November.
- [3] Following discussion and consideration the Council approved the next steps workstreams outlined in the paper.

##### B. Property Disposal

- [1] The Council considered a report from the Director of Property and Campus Services seeking approval

- [2] The Council noted:
- a. that the University is required to comply with the Charities Act 2011 in respect of the disposal of land;
  - b. that a Surveyor's report had been obtained in accordance with Section 119(1)(a) of the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities (Qualified Surveyors' Report) Regulations 1992;
- [3] The Council ~~agreed~~ to proceed with the disposal of Y Felin Tys ~~at a~~ reduced price and to engage with the selling agents and Solicitors.

#### 19.121 DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL CHARTER

- A. The University Secretary reminded members that at meeting in April 2020 the Council agreed to the substance and direction of travel of the draft Supplemental Charter. Following the meeting further comments had been invited from the Senate and other stakeholders and in particular the Charter was discussed at the University Senate on 26 May 2020 and a suggested amendment was

#### 19.124 REPORT FROM THE SENATE

The Vice-Chancellor presented the report from the Senate meetings held on the 21<sup>st</sup> April, 26<sup>th</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The Council ~~noted~~ that the Senate had received an update on the work undertaken to review the University Charter, Statutes and Ordinances at each meeting, and that following discussion at the May Senate a change had been made to the Charter. The Senate was also consulted on Ordinance 12 which relates to the Senate.

#### 19.125 FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE

The Report of the meeting of the Finance and Strategy Committee held on the 26 June 2020 (attached as Appendix ~~ix~~ to the official copy of the Minutes) was ~~approved~~ was ~~noted~~ that the Pontio Report would be discussed at the Council ~~Day~~ in October 2020.

#### 19.126 REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

The Report of the meeting of the Remuneration Committee held on the 23 April 2020 (attached as Appendix ~~ix~~ to the official copy of the Minutes) was ~~approved~~.

#### 19.127 AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

The Report of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee held on the 6th July 2020 (attached as Appendix ~~ix~~ to the official copy of the Minutes) was ~~approved~~ was ~~noted~~ that

19.131REPORT FROM THE